

## **Favoritism**

Much can be written regarding favoritism in the CoB. From the days of Joe Greene, who regularly awarded raises to his personal favorites without regard to their actual contributions, to Harold Doty, who has engineered Fourth Year Reviews and Letters of Agreement for his personal favorites, administrators in the CoB have never been shy about allowing personal feelings to bleed into their decisions, especially those decisions regarding rewards systems.

It should be clear that allowing personal feelings of fondness, friendship, or the like to become a part of the merit system is wrong, even if based only on the terms most commonly viewed by the public at large as the faculty charge, educating students. Teaching, research, and service benefit students. Whether a particular faculty member has been at USM for 20 days or 20 years, he should be judged on the basis of his contributions to teaching, research, and service to the institution. What shouldn't enter into the equation is that faculty member's length of service, what neighborhood he lives in, how many children he has, whether he coauthors or is friends with his chair, etc., because those things really don't improve the quality of education for students.

Imagine that CoB faculty evaluated CoB students using criteria similar to the criteria that CoB administrators use to evaluate CoB faculty. Imagine the public outcry that would occur if it became known that a particular CoB faculty member almost NEVER gave a community college transfer a passing grade because community college transfers "haven't paid their dues at USM". Imagine the public outcry that would occur if it became known that a particular CoB faculty member only gave A's to students who regularly hang around that faculty member's office because those students are "good kids". Imagine the public outcry that would occur if it became known that a particular faculty member offered his favorite students easy independent study courses to replace difficult required courses because those students are "good old boys". All students who earned their diplomas the correct way would be up in arms, as would many other stakeholders in USM, and rightfully so.

As an experienced educator recently said, "You will always have students who you like more than others, but professionalism requires that all students are evaluated using the same criteria." Using different criteria to evaluate students wouldn't fly at USM. Using different criteria to evaluate faculty shouldn't fly at USM. Favoritism isn't acceptable in professional settings. Until USM stops the favoritism, it will stand as a perfect example of the backward reputation most of the United States associates with Mississippi.